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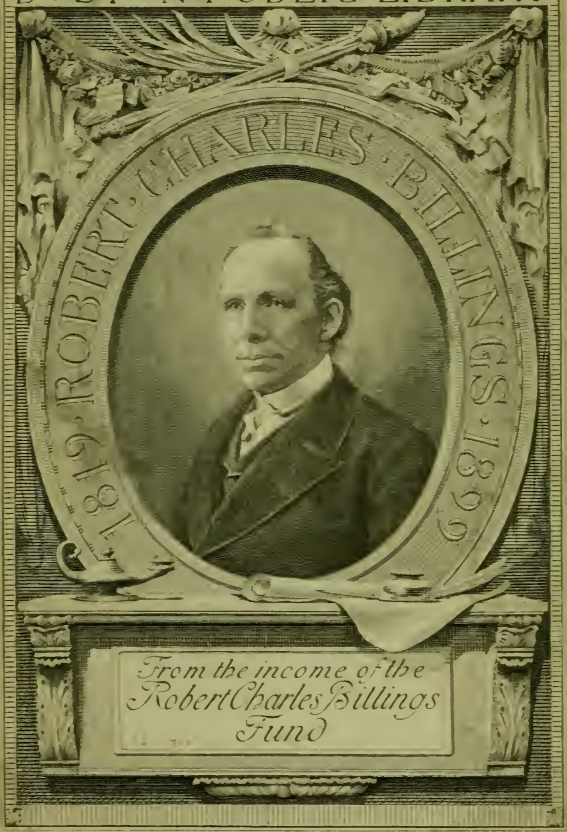


A

Journey to the Moon,

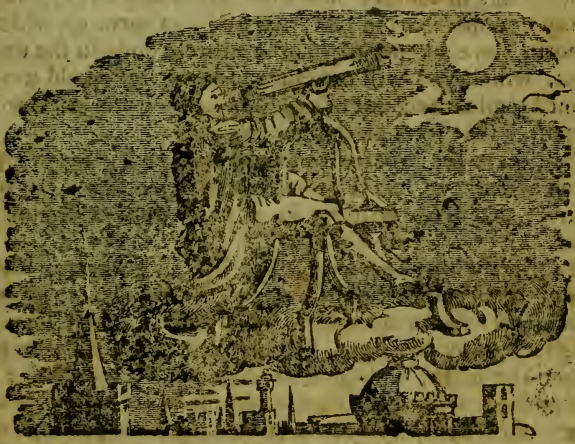
AND

Interesting Conversations with the Inhabitants

RESPECTING THE

CONDITION OF MAN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF WORLDS DISPLAYED.



LONDON:

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

JOURNEY TO THE MOON.

I DO not design to discuss the subject respecting the magnitude of creation, or whether the stars with which we are surrounded, be so many suns enlightening other worlds, or whether the planets, enlightened by the same sun with ourselves, be peopled by beings resembling or differing from us. No, I shall leave such subjects to the investigation of more philosophical heads than mine. But as supposition is said to hurt nobody, perhaps you will permit me to suppose that there are inhabitants in some of these luminaries, and that I, wearied with my confinement on this little globe of earth on which I was born, have taken a trip to the nearest body in the upper regions, which you will conclude to be our good old moon, and that I send an account of my supposed journey, with some occurrences that took place after my arrival.

I shall therefore proceed to amuse and, perhaps, edify you with an account of my supposed singular journey; but pray remember that I am writting in a parabolical or figurative manner.

On a bright winter's evening, when the heavens were without a cloud to conceal their glory, and the full moon shone with her midnight solemn splendor, while I was busy viewing it through my large telescope, I found myself gradually ascending from the earth, though I confess I did not perceive my ascent at the first, being so intent on the object I was investigating. At length my heart went pit-a-pat, expecting every moment to fall down with a crash. Happily I kept fast hold of my telescope notwithstanding my tremor.

As I advanced into the aereal regions, the rapidity of my motion increased every moment, till I thought I must be going at the rate of a thousand miles an hour. The world I had left behind, began to assume the appearance of a mighty moon, from which I conjectured that the moon to which I supposed myself travelling, had got betwixt me and the sun, and that the earth was reflecting back the sun's rays. Becoming a little more accustomed to my strange unaccount-

able circumstances, I had courage to use my glass in viewing the world I had left behind. I distinctly perceived the island of Britain, surrounded by the ocean; but it appeared smaller than my own little garden. I could easily distinguish the Pacific ocean, with its numerous and scattered islands, though I could not at that time discover all its parts, the sun's light not having yet illuminated the whole extent of it.

When the sun had again got behind our world, the moon shone with its accustomed brightness, but to appearance increased to an enormous size. I knew this change arose from my having advanced so much nearer to it. I fancied I saw mountains, volcanos, oceans and seas, and wondered if I should alight upon its surface.

After several days journey I found my extreme swiftness gradually impeded, which I hoped was an indication of my having reached the moon's atmosphere. Now the island of Britain only appeared as a small speck upon the earth's surface, even when viewed through my powerful magnifier.

Perhaps you are disposed to enquire what prevented me from starving during this strange journey, where I could meet with no friendly house, nor comfortable inn by the way. I happened when I left the earth to have my pockets half-full of plumb cakes, which I had provided for some young people, whom I expected to visit me, and had forgotten to lay them aside till they should be needed. These, used in the most frugal manner, supported me by the way.

At length I reached something resembling the clouds of our own world, and I assure you I was glad to see something world-like. When I had moved a little farther the air became so dense, that I descended towards the moon as gently as if I had been in an air-balloon. The inhabitants perceived my approach and assembled in crouds near the place where they conjectured I must alight. Upon my arrival I was hailed with shouts, the noise of which almost deprived me of hearing. Though remarkably drowsy, in consequence of having had no sleep for many nights, my joy at having arrived without loss of life, enlivened my drooping spirits.

Many of the higher orders of the inhabitants were arriving every minute, for the report of my appearance soo

circulated throughout the surrounding region; by these I was asked many questions, but at length a large assembly being formally arranged in the centre of what I supposed a garden, I was placed in their midst, on a seat which appeared to be made of gold. Then a grave personage rose, and intimated to me that he had a few enquiries to make for the gratification of his numerous friends, to which he had no doubt I should give correct answers.

From whence have you come? was his first enquiry — I am (said I) an inhabitant of a distant world which we call earth, the same which reflects light to you from the sun during the night.

By what means did you come hither?—I cannot explain this, as I am as ignorant how my conveyance hither has been effected as you are. I found myself ascend from the earth, without any exertion on my part, and this involuntary motion continued till my arrival here.

What kind of beings inhabit the world from whence you come, are they all much the same in appearance as yourself?—Yes, much the same.

Are they acquainted with God the creator of all?—God has made himself known to them, by means of a book, which he inspired some of his servants in different ages to write, for the instruction of our race.

You have mentioned different ages, were not all your friends from the beginning?—No. we continue only a few years upon the earth, then we die. and our souls depart, leaving our bodies to moulder away, into their original dust from which they were composed.

Upon stating this circumstance respecting our race, I observed much astonishment expressed by all present, which arose from its being the first time they had ever heard of death. I was then asked if this had always been the condition of man?—I assured them it had not, for the first of our race. when he came from the creating hand of God, was a holy, and happy being, but by listening to the insinuations of a wicked spirit, he had been prevailed upon to rebel against God, and thereby ruined himself and all his descendants—but before this man acknowledged his offence, or solicited forgiveness, God came forward with a revelation of astonishing mercy. He published his purpose to

send his own Son into our world, to assume our nature, t
bear the guilt of our sins, to die for their atonement, an
thereby to provide a foundation for the hope and eternal je
of all who should put their trust in him.

I was by this time so overcome with sleep that I begge
they would allow me to take a little repose, which the
willingly consented to.

When I awoke, I found myself entirely alone. O
walking to a little distance I was met by several inhabi
tants, who had been present at the meeting which took
place on my arrival. They expressed much desire to know
how the inhabitants of the earth occupied their time. I sta
ted a variety of trades, manufactures, &c. which require
active industry to render them productive. I particularly
explained the labour requisite since man had sinned, to ren
der our fields fruitful, and the dreadful effects which would
ensue if their cultivation were neglected. I explained how
wisely God had balanced the wants of society, that all its
departments depended so much upon each other, that it was
the interest of each to fulfil its part. That governors can-
not live without husbandmen, nor husbandmen happily
without governors. That the taylor requires the aid of the
baker, and the baker of the taylor, to render him comfortable.

While conversing with these persons, the venerable per-
sonage who took the lead in my examination on the former
occasion met us. He, with considerable anxiety, enquired
if God had yet sent his Son into our world to accomplish the
great purpose for which he was promised. I assured him
he had come and had finished the great work that was given
him to do. Did he actually die?—Yes, said I, he did. A
voluntary death I suppose, said he?—Yes, it was voluntary,
because he had abundance of power to prevent it; but you
will be surprised to hear that it was effected by the hands of
men, who were full of rage against him. Why were they
enraged against him?—Because they hated him for his holy
and righteous conduct, they could not bear his fidelity in
testifying against their wickedness, wherefore, with wicked
hands, they killed this Prince of life; but on the third day he
arose from the dead, and before he ascended into his
heavenly kingdom of glory; he commanded his followers to
travel over the earth, preaching the forgiveness of sins, and

ernal life through his death, to all who repented, and believed in his name. With great emotion I was asked what reception this merciful message met with from the inhabitants of the earth?—It gave, said I, the most consummate joy to thousands, who believed and welcomed the gracious news. To hear that Christ the Son of God submitted to a painful and shameful death, to obtain justification and life for the ungodly, astonished all who believe it. These forsook sin with all their hearts, and became truly desirous of only doing what pleased God. But with regret I must inform you that the number of those converted to the faith of Christ, has in every age borne a small proportion to those who have either neglected or rejected salvation by the Son of God.

But how can men be happy, said one of the company, while they reject the salvation of God; while they neither love, nor serve, nor seek the God of heaven?—Not one of them, said I, are really happy, but they do not consider their unhappiness to arise from being destitute of the religion of the Son of God. they rather conceive it to proceed from some deficiency in the things of the world which they possess. Some imagine if their riches or honour were increased, or some alteration in their outward circumstances took place, then they should enjoy uninterrupted happiness. They labour, often with great industry, to acquire this supposed good—many perish during the pursuit—others who succeed in obtaining the object of their desire, find still a want of something to satisfy the unbounded desires of the immortal mind. The secret is this, that nothing but an infinite God, revealing himself by His spirit to their minds, and enabling them to believe and trust in him, can give perfect and lasting satisfaction.

My last observation received the most marked approbation of the Lunar inhabitants; they truly pitied the ignorant triflers of our sinful world who prefer drunkenness, debauchery, sinful amusements, exorbitant riches, flattery, and other things that are highly esteemed amongst men, to the pleasures of godliness, to the life of God in the soul of man, to the animating hope of future bliss.

That they might understand more distinctly the state of things upon the earth, I related to them the condition of some families upon it. I know a family, said I, consisting of a

husband, wife, and six children. For two or three yea
after marriage they lived comfortably, indeed so long as th
husband continued sober and attentive to his busines
things went on well, but the family removing to anoth
part, the husband, by the nature of his business, was led int
abominable company, who made sport of his sobriety, ar
who often asserted he was held in chains by his wife. The
frequent attacks made a deep impression on his mind. Lik
his companions, he began to scold his wife for trifli
faults—then he introduced his rude companions into th
house, who soon widened the breach. Nothing now wa
to be heard but violent disputes, heart-rending complaint
and frequently they came to blows. The husband gradual
became an unfeeling monster, he lost all regard to his wi
and viewed his children as hindrances to his pleasures. H
indifference and cruelty towards his wife, who was ve
willing to do well, gradually increased; he actually studie
to render her life miserable. Often on an evening, he wou
be fighting with a comrade at the door, while his wife a
children were screaming within from fear of what the
might expect upon his re-entering the house. At length th
poor woman was worn out with grief, her strength dai
declined, and then she died, leaving six helpless babes und
the care of this unfeeling father.

Such horrid misery has sin introduced into our world, th
this case is far from being singular, the same misery exten
over a great portion of human society: yet thousands nev
consider from whence this misery and wretchedness sprin
never reflect upon the Son of God having come to establi
peace and blessedness on the earth. And though he h
graciously appointed one day in seven, called the Sabbat
to be devoted entirely to his service, they will not atte
the means of instruction and salvation which he hath a
pointed on that day, for promoting human happines
They either employ their leisure hours on the Sabbath,
rioting and drunkenness, wandering in the streets or in th
fields or loitering at home with their families, indifferent
all spiritual and important concerns; forgetting that t
present scene of things shall soon come to an end, and th
they must give an account to God of all their wicked deed
The stupidity, the inconsiderate conduct of thousands,
almost inconceivable to those who have not seen it.

I must, however, say, to the praise of the glory of Jeho-
h's grace, that he often extends salvation to such fami-
s as the one I have described. He leads them to consider
ir ways and to compare them with the word of truth.
e convinces them of their misery, their sin, and their dan-
r: he directs their attention to a suffering Savior; they
for mercy. God hears their prayer and delivers them
t of all their troubles. Now they become a sober, peace-
le, and loving family; their expences are lessened by their
riety, and even their worldly comforts are greatly in-
ased, godliness having the promise of the life that now is
well as the life that is to come. They begin to derive
at pleasure from reading the Holy Scriptures which God
h caused to be written for their instruction; from mutual
nversation respecting them, from regular attendance on
e ordinances of religion, and from believing that God
es for them, and will cause the bitters as well as the
eets of life to work for their good.

Such persons often compare their present peace and com-
rt, with their former wrangling and wretchedness, which
nstrains them to praise and magnify a merciful and gracious God for his goodness to them. They frequently visit
eir former unhappy companions, to tell them what God has
ought on their behalf, and to commend Jesus Christ the
vior, who I before mentioned, to their serious attention.
metimes they meet with a favorable reception from these
olish men, but more frequently they are despised for their
ncern and kindness, as if it were an improper intrusion.

Here ended my conversation for the present, with these
habitants of the moon, respecting the affairs of our world.
haps I may afterwards convey so you the substance of
bsequent conversations, and relate circumstances which
curred that may afford both pleasure and satisfaction. In
e mean time let the reader reflect on the above conversa-
ons; and consider to which of the classes he belongs,
hether he is of those who are vainly seeking happiness in
esent enjoyments, or of those who are seeking glory,
nor, and immortality in the service of Jesus Christ, and
tiently waiting for his eternal kingdom.

FINIS.

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